

Via ECFS

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *Written Ex Parte Presentation*

Preserving the Open Internet, GN Docket No. 09-191;
Framework for Broadband Internet Service, GN Docket No. 10-127

December 14, 2010

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of co-authors: Larry Cohen, the President of the Communications Workers of America, and Marc Morial, the President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Urban League, I am submitting their attached opinion editorial for the above-referenced dockets.

The attached opinion editorial details their support for Commissioner Genachowski's proposed Open Internet Order and emphasizes that an end to the net neutrality debate will be beneficial to broadband deployment and adoption efforts and overall economic recovery.

The views expressed in the opinion editorial are consistent with viewpoints that the authors and their respective organizations have expressed in past comments to the Commission regarding issues related to the above proceedings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Debbie Goldman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Debbie" and last name "Goldman" clearly distinguishable.

Debbie Goldman
Telecommunications Policy Director
Communications Workers of America

“Consensus Today: Broadband Tomorrow”

By Larry Cohen and Marc Morial

As our nation recovers from one of the worst economic downturns in history, Americans are looking for good news about our country's future. Any 21st century recovery will be based on infrastructure investments in broadband technology. A recent study estimates that over the next five years, broadband service providers will invest at least \$30 billion, creating or sustaining 509,000 jobs, while bringing high-speed Internet to communities across the country. Many of the jobs created or sustained will be in urban communities that have borne the greatest brunt of the current economic recession.

Such efforts are essential as universal broadband deployment and adoption is not yet a reality in the United States. Unfortunately, the United States continues to lag behind other nations in high-speed networks, falling to 15th in the world in broadband adoption. Despite modest gains in broadband adoption rates this year, a digital divide persists, as more than 100 million Americans lack a home broadband connection. It is imperative that broadband is both affordable and accessible to these Americans, so they are able to take advantage of the entrepreneurial, economic and educational benefits that broadband can provide.

In March, the FCC created a blueprint to spur broadband deployment and adoption through its National Broadband Plan, as directed by Congress in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Plan offered ambitious goals for building and upgrading our high-speed networks, providing affordable access and digital skills to every American, and ensuring broadband connectivity at vital anchor institutions like schools, libraries and community centers. Unfortunately, we have yet to fulfill the Plan's objective of 100 percent broadband deployment and adoption.

For this reason, we were pleased to learn that the FCC had put an Open Internet Order on the agenda for the Commission's December meeting. The proposal is a consensus solution that will protect an open Internet while ensuring that investment and job creation in the broadband sector will continue. The Commission should move forward with this proposal so we are finally able to put the gridlock of the net neutrality debate behind us and concentrate on other pressing communications concerns, such as reform of the Universal Service Fund and the development of stronger policies to ensure meaningful participation in broadband expansion by all of the diverse communities and segments of our nation, along with how to finance world-class broadband deployment.

Resolving this debate will restore certainty to the broadband market and allow our focus to return to the build-out of broadband networks and closing the digital divide.

Larry Cohen is the President of the Communications Workers of America and Marc Morial is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Urban League.